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TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS
Office of the Civil Administrator
Saipan District

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10 December 1948

From: The Civil Administrator.
To: Deputy High Commissioner,
Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Subject: Christmas Press Release.

Reference: (a) DepHiComTerPacIs disp 180715Z November.

Enclosure: (A) Subject Release.

1. In accordance with the provisions of reference (a),
enclosure (A) is herewith submitted.

Rauilhelm
R. A. WILHELM

CHRISTMAS PRESS RELEASE

On this island where the Catholic religion is so strong, the Christmas season becomes to the celebrated and religiously adhered to holiday on the calendar. As Christmas, 1948, rolls around, marking the end of a year during which the native population of Saipan has made great strides toward their own rehabilitation and a return to living as it was in pre-war days, indications are that this will be one of the most gala seasons ever.

Beginning with Christmas Eve, there will be a midnight mass at the Catholic church in Chalan Kanoa. For this occasion, the church will be decorated with flowers and a special array of colored electric lights. There is, traditionally, very little in evidence of the practice of houses and yard decorations for Christmas, as Americans know it. The institution of the Christmas tree, after having been introduced by the Germans, was allowed to languish during the Japanese regime, and this year only a few of the more sophisticated families will have a tree in their house.

One item, however, which is in keeping with the Occidental concept of Christmas is the exchange of gifts between families and friends on Christmas Day. This custom, dating back to the first days of western occupation of the Marianas Islands, when Christian concepts first came into being, will be supplemented by the arrival of Santa Claus, via ox-cart, at Chalan Kanoa school on the afternoon of December 23rd to distribute Junior Red Cross gift boxes to the native children of Saipan. This supply will be augmented by gifts purchased from local contributions. Before the arrival of Santa (in the form of Mr. Richard J. G. Bomar, Saipan Red Cross Field Director) at Saipan, he will have paid a flying visit to Rota and Tinian to distribute a portion of the previously mentioned gifts. The remaining islands of Alamagan, Agrihan and Chichi Jima received their gifts for Christmas distribution on the field trip completed in late November.

After Santa's arrival at the school, the school children will present a Christmas pageant, under the direction of William Reyes, principal of the Saipan School.

ENCLOSURE (A)